

# Teaching & Learning Day Fall 2023: Cultivating Sustainability in our Classrooms

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Seneca's **Teaching & Learning Day Fall 2023** was an inspiring event with a strong focus on the integration of sustainability into your curriculum and classrooms. The day featured an array of distinguished speakers and thought-provoking sessions, offering educators and staff a valuable opportunity to explore ways to promote sustainability and environmental justice in their teaching.



## Keynote Speakers: Fikile Nxumalo, Ph.D., and Preeti Nayak, Ph.D. (Candidate)

The event opened with keynote speakers Dr. Fikile Nxumalo and Dr. Preeti Nayak from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) of the University of Toronto. Their presentation, titled "Bringing environmental justice into the classroom: pedagogical commitments, orientations, and possibilities," underscored the urgency of integrating anti-racist and anti-colonial approaches into environmental education. They emphasized the imperative of these approaches in addressing the disparities linked to environmental vulnerability. The keynotes were punctuated with concrete examples of pedagogical strategies rooted in environmental justice, drawn from their respective research and

educational experiences. Attendees were encouraged to engage in guided critical reflective discussions, enabling them to consider how to adapt these pedagogical approaches to their own educational contexts.

## Faculty Insights and Post-Keynote Sessions

Seneca's own faculty members from diverse academic disciplines shared their real-world experiences in integrating sustainability into their courses. Their insights offered practical and tangible examples of how educators can infuse sustainability principles into their teaching. Furthermore, the promise of post-keynote sessions provided a platform for more profound discussions and the sharing of additional insights.

During this session, the faculty had the opportunity to witness and engage in discussions with champions who provided valuable insights into the contemporary approach of incorporating sustainability into the classroom. They gained a better understanding of the practical steps that individual professors and faculty members could take, and got a clearer picture of what sustainability integration actually looks like within a classroom setting today.



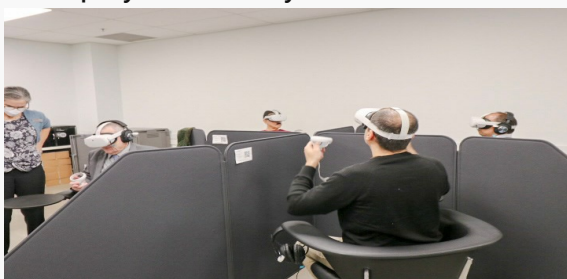
## Breakout Sessions

The afternoon featured a series of captivating breakout sessions, extending the dialogue on sustainability integration:

1. **The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in the Classroom:** Kerri Knudsen facilitated a session that provided actionable insights into weaving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into teaching and curriculum. This was particularly valuable for educators striving to incorporate these globally recognized goals into their courses.
2. **We Cannot Exist without the Land: A Conversation with Elder Blu Waters:** Elder Blu Waters led a poignant and thought-provoking conversation about the profound significance of the land to Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island. The conversation emphasized the importance of strengthening our connection with the land and

contributing to the journey of Truth and Reconciliation.

3. **Seneca Sustainability Walk:** Paula Echeveste Petrone from the Office of Sustainability led participants on a guided tour of Newnham Campus, showcasing the numerous sustainability initiatives that enhance campus life. This session allowed attendees to witness firsthand the practical sustainability efforts taking place within the institution.
4. **What's the Buzz About Virtual Reality?:** Linda Facchini and Todd Malarczuk provided a unique and immersive experience using virtual reality to educate participants about the crucial role of bees in our ecosystems. This session introduced attendees to Pollinator Park, a virtual museum aimed at raising awareness about the vital role that bees play in our daily lives.



5. **Harvest your Ideas to Infuse Sustainability in your Course:** Lara McInnis and Elisheva Lightstone facilitated an interactive workshop where participants gathered and exchanged sustainability integration ideas. Educators had the opportunity to collaborate and generate innovative approaches to infusing sustainability into their curriculum.
6. **Sustainability in Action: How to Cultivate Sustainability Leadership in Your Students?:** Wai Chu Cheng delved into strategies for incorporating sustainability leadership development into the curriculum, empowering students to actively engage with the complex global sustainability challenges of our time.

The Teaching & Learning Centre Team delivered a comprehensive learning experience, underscoring the pivotal role of sustainability and environmental justice in education for Fall 2023. Attendees not only gained theoretical insights but also practical strategies to empower them in creating a more sustainable and equitable future through their teaching. The event served as a catalyst for positive change within the academic community.

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